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MISSING.

A sailor's yarn you'd like to have me spin?
Sit down, shipmate; here, off Nantucket coast
I was the Captain of the Abel Gwynn
That stormy year the Mary Lee was lost.

Her Captain's name was William Henry Court,
A gallant and a careful skipper, too;
I saw the ship weigh anchor and clear port,
And bear away along the heaving blue,

Far out at sea she stood, the Mary Lee,
A whaler rigged and from this harbor bound,
With all sail spread from the cold northern sea;
A good ship—aye, and timbers staunch and sound.

But that was more than twenty years ago,
And old Nantucket town will never see,
Across the distant billows rising slow,
The topmast of the good ship Mary Lee.

Aye! aye! that little woman waiting there?
The skipper's wife—how fast she's getting gray,
Brown as an autumn oak-leaf was her hair
The morning that the Mary sailed away.

She comes here ev'ry morning with that glass,
(She's not in her right mind, 'twixt you and me)
And while the ships come in, the poor old lass,
Stands watching for the bonny Mary Lee,

—*Inter-Ocean.*

DISGUSTED WITH THEM.

A Strong-Minded Lady Airs Her Views on "Shopping Women."

The strong-minded lady was sipping chocolate in one of the little lunch resorts in Sixth avenue. Her lip curled with scorn as through the windows she beheld the crowds of ladies shopping with all their heart and soul and might, as though they had been brought into the world for no other purpose and fully intended to carry out their mission. The strong-minded lady was disgusted. The young girl who sat at the table with her tried her utmost to dissipate the gloomy clouds which hovered so persistently over her intellectual companion. The effort was futile. The strong-minded lady declined to be anything but disgusted.

"Don't tell me that such a condition of things is normal," she said, as a group of ladies more energetic and chattering with more volubility than any she had previously seen passed before the window. "I tell you it is nothing of the kind. Those creatures there are for the time being puppets, dolls, or anything you like. Women I decline to call them. Look at them rushing madly into the stores as though their lives depended upon the act. What do they want? Intellectuality to entertain their husbands? Funds of information to amuse their fathers? Attractive little devices to keep their brothers at home? No. Six cents' worth of ribbon to match a bonnet, half a yard of plush to cover a hat designed to excel one they have previously seen, or some material from which to make a dress for summer, though summer isn't nearly here. Pshaw!"

The strong-minded lady viciously drained her cup of chocolate, ordered another in stentorian tones, and turned to her youthful companion with renewed vigor. "A shopping woman," she said, "is an abnormal condition of womanhood induced by the absurdly rapid civilization of the times. I have for the past six years studied the phenomenon of shopping, and I may say, as the result of my studies, that the chronic shopper is afflicted with a species of insanity. She can not help herself. She is determined to shop, come what may. It is as much a part of her daily work as eating or drinking. Let me cite the case of an aunt of mine, which I diagnosed for my own benefit, and which I trust you will allow me to quote in a medical manner. Lizzie C., my aunt, daughter of a very estimable gentleman, married when a young girl, and mixed in the best society. She despised frivolity, had written a series of Bible stories for her children, was always ready to preach against the foolishness of girls, and was generally considered a model wife. I said some time in her house about the year 1878, and noticed that her husband's business seemed in a bad way, and that there was some paucity of funds. Lizzie C., my aunt, consequently felt herself obliged to reduce expenses and to buy everything of the cheapest. A frantic desire for bargains came upon her. She would rise at an early hour of the morning and attend sales which she had seen advertised, though there was absolutely no necessity that she should do so. 'I have had such a tiring day, dear,' she said to me; 'I have been at the store since nine o'clock this morning. It's extremely fatiguing. But I am pleased to say I have bought some wonderfully cheap goods. They are simply remarkable. Look here.' She produced a parcel, unfolded it, and placed upon the table what to my horror I recognized as black crape collars, cuffs and bows.

"'My dear,' said I, in amazement, 'what did you make those wretched purchases for? I'm not superstitious, but I don't like to see you buying crape when you don't need it.'

"'You goose,' said Lizzie, laughing, 'they only cost a trifle, and I intend to keep them until I go into mourning. Perhaps I shall never have such a chance again. And you never know when you'll require them.' Now," said the strong-minded lady, energetically, "do you call that the act of a sane woman? My dear child, her intellect had been touched by her husband's misfortunes, though no one recognized that fact but myself. Her doctor always said that she was the healthiest and most clear-minded woman he had ever seen. She reminds me of the fictitious case of Mrs. Smith, which isn't half as ridiculous as you might think at first. Mrs. Smith went to a sale and saw a very cheap door-plate with the name, 'Mrs. Jones,' upon it. She bought it. 'My dear girl,' said a friend to whom she spoke of her purchase, 'what did you buy that useless thing for?' 'It's not useless,' said Mrs. Smith, indignantly. 'My husband might die and I might marry a man named Mr. Jones. And it's awfully cheap.'"

"But don't compare those sensible ladies shopping on Sixth avenue to the cranks you have just mentioned," said the youthful listener, gravely.

"The principle is the same, dear—the principle is precisely the same," said the strong-minded lady, emphatically. "But to continue with my Aunt Lizzie. One day she came home with a huge pink sheet, which she had folded into as small a compass as she possibly could, and stuffed under her sealskin jacket. 'Look here, Philip,' she said to her husband, 'isn't this a deliciously cheap thing? Fancy! I only paid a penny per yard.'

"'What's it for?' said Philip, with a grunt. 'I don't see what the use of it is. It may be cheap, but what's it for?'

"'Well, dear,' said Lizzie, meditatively, 'I don't know what it's for, I'm sure, but it would have been a perfect sin to let it go by at such a ridiculously low price. It'll come in useful some time.'

"She had a wardrobe," continued the strong-minded lady, "perfectly full of remnants she had bought at sales and subsequently made into dresses. Sometimes she kept the remnants for years before she had them made up. They were consequently most old fashioned, and frequently I have heard people say: 'There is Lizzie with one of the dresses Noah's wife wore when she came out of the ark.' In other points my aunt was perfectly sensible. She could talk politics like a professional politician, was well versed on the literature of the day, and entertained friends in a graceful and charming manner. But to see her rise at an early hour of the morning and go off to a sale at the same time her husband left for business, not to return until he did, late at night, was a heart-rending spectacle. I couldn't reason her out of such proceedings, though I tried my hardest to do so. She was quite obdurate. I suppose you know," continued the strong-minded lady, "that bargain-hunters are really the most unworldly people living. A lady, let us say, can obtain a certain article at Harlem for fifty-two cents. Very good. She hears, however, that in Twenty-third street the same thing is sold at forty-eight cents. At once she jumps up and goes down town. She pays ten cents to the elevated road for her journey down and ten cents for her return. But she says: 'I have got what I wanted for forty-eight cents, while at Harlem it would have cost four cents more.' She has positively no idea that the article in reality has cost her sixty-eight cents. She would laugh at you if you were to endeavor to convince her of that fact."

"She's an exception," said the young companion, with a smile.

"Don't you believe it," commanded the lady of the vigorous mind, almost stirring the bottom out of the cup which contained her chocolate. "She's no exception. I don't say, either, that she's the rule, but I assert that she represents a very large class of bargain-hunting ladies. I should recommend a complete course of logic as a remedy of what I must consider as an abnormal state of mind. Doctors may say what they like about female foibles, but I'm a female, and I know what those foibles should be. I suppose you have never heard that there exist ladies who make it a part of their daily duty to visit the principal stores of the city, look at quantities of goods, and never buy a cent's worth. I assure you that's a fact. Some of the big stores here have made that discovery, and have, moreover, by engaging the services of keen-eyed and observant shop-walkers, so arranged things that these ladies become known to the salesmen, who consequently decline to waste their time with them. In a large Twenty-third street store the other day I was told that whenever one of these ladies comes into the establishment the shop-walker conducts her to the desired counter, says to the salesman the word 'cave,' which, of course, you know, dear, means 'beware,' and leaves her, satisfied that she will not remain very long in the store. When a salesman receives a 'cave' customer he at once declares that the article she desires to see is 'sold out,' and won't be in stock again for a long time."

"Well, what do these women mean by such aimless shopping?"

"Why, my dear, it's a cheap entertainment. You remember Jonas Chuzzlewit, who used to visit the outsides of theaters and the insides of churches because they cost nothing. Well, the same principle is involved in this aimless shopping business. Of course it is an outrageous thing to do, but you know there are lots of people who will do outrageous things, and think nothing of it. It usually takes a couple of months before a 'cave' customer can be satisfactorily distinguished, this city being so large that she can divide her unprofitable patronage among many stores. These ladies generally carry sachels, and have all the appearance of the most inveterate shoppers. They make minute inquiries as to the goods they are inspecting, and always turn away with the words, sorrowfully uttered: 'This is not exactly what I want. How extremely annoying.' And," continued the strong-minded lady angrily, as she paid the waiter for her chocolate, and in her deep abstraction forgot to "tip" him, "you read of the poor wretches who are taken to the police station because they are said to be disorderly in causing annoyances in the public streets? I have seen a poor little banana-seller captured by a policeman, and numerous others who are endeavoring to make a livelihood, because they have forgotten the red tape which must be employed in the act. But think of these women—these obstructions to honest purchasers! They may flourish and they may do as they like——."

"Well, how could any one prevent it?" asked the girl, impatiently.

"I don't say they could, my dear—I don't say they could. I am simply speaking of the injustice of things—how everything favors the rich and nothing the poor. The inveterate shopper is, in my opinion, a positive nuisance. She can't explain her business satisfactorily. It was all very well for Longfellow to make his namby-pamby Precissa exclaim: 'I can not reason; I can only feel.' We want reasoning, logical women nowadays. None of your milk-and-water nonentities for goodness sake. Look at them! Look at them!" continued the strong-minded lady, staring irately at the unconscious shoppers. "Oh, my sex, that you should have come to this! Come, my dear, let us cross the road, and pursue the side streets, where our eyes will not be offended at every step we take."—*N. Y. Sun.*

MINE VAMILY

Dimbled schecks, mit eyes off pine,
Mout like id vas moisd mit dew,
Und leedle teeth shust peekin' droo—
Dot's der baby.

Curly head, und full off glee,
Drousers all oudt at der knee—
He vas peen blaying horse, you see
Dot's little Yawcob.

Von hundord-seexty in der shade,
Der oder day ven she vas veighed—
She beats me soon, I vas avraid—
Dot's mine Katrina.

Bare-footed hed, und poody stoudt,
Mit grooked legs dot vill bend oudt,
Fond off his bier und sauer kraut
Dot's me himself.

Von schmall young baby, full of fun,
Von leedle prite-eyed, roguish son,
Von frau to greet when vork vas done—
Dot's mine vamily.

BOSTON, Mass.—Herr Editor Boston *Globe*: Der abofe biece of poultry aboud mine vamily vas wridden for der Detroit *Frei Presse* some dime ago, und would you pelief it off der oldt lady, mine moder-in-law, don'd feel so pad, rights avay, to dink she vas lefd oudt in der coldt, dot I nefer hear de firsd off it effer sendse; und so ash der holidays vas coming along, in der schveet pooty soon, already, I dink to mineselluff dot I schust wride her oup for a Christmas present, und so I send der engloged lines mid illustradions by mine oldt friend "Boz", who firsd dressed oup mine "Leedle Yawcob Strauss" for der noosebabers. Yours respectably,

YAWCOB STRAUSS.

MINE MODER-IN-LAW.

Dhere vas many qveer dings in dis land off der free,
I neffer could qvite understand;
Der beoples dhey all seem so deefrent to me
As dhose in mine own faderland.
Dhey gets blendy droubles, und indo mishaps,
Mitoud der least bit off a cause;
Und, vould you pelief id? dhose mean Yangee chaps,

Dhey fights mit dheir moder-in-laws!

Shust dink off a white man so vicked as dot!
Vhy not gife der oldt lady a show?
Who vas id geds oup, ven der 'ighdt id vas hot,
Mit mine baby, I shust like to know!
Und dhen in der vinter vhen Katrine vas sick,
Und der mornings vas shnowy und raw,
Who make 'ighdt avay oup dot fire so qvick?
Vhy, dot vos mine moder-in-law.

Id vas von off dhose voman's-rights vellers, I been,
Dhere vas nodings dot's mean aboudt me;
Vhen der oldt lady vishes to run dot masheen,
Vhy, I shust lets her run id you see.

Und vhen dot shly Yawcob vas cutting some dricks
(A block off der oldt chip he vas, yaw!)
Eef she goes for dot chap like some dousands off bricks,
Dot's all righdt! She's mine moder-in-law.

Veek oudt und veek in, id vas always der same,
Dot voman's vas boss off der house;
Budt, dhen, neffer mindt! I vas glad dot she came,
She vas kind to mine young Yawcob Strauss.
Und vhen dhere vhas vater to get vrom der shpring,
Und fire-vood to shplit oup and saw,
She vos welcome to do id. Dhere's not anydling
Dot's too good for mine moder-in-law.

—*C. F. Adams, in Boston Globe.*

A HAPPY DIVERSION.

How a Rather Peculiar Man Kept Himself in Good Humor.

"I took dinner with a peculiar man the other day," said the Secretary of State. "I had known him for a long time, but had never noticed anything strange about him until the other day. When we sat down to dinner, Colonel Hackett—my friend's name—called his servant, a large negro, and said:

"'Robert please bring us some bread, and, oh, Bob, you've forgot the soup! Bring it, please, and you will place me under so many obligations. Ah, hold on, Bob. You have forgotten to give my friend a plate. Please bring him one.'

"When the servant had retired to execute the humiliated appeals to his generosity, I turned to my friend and said:

"'Colonel, you astonish me. I have ever taken you to be a man of great firmness.'

"'I am.'

"'Then why are you so servile in asking your servant to do anything?'

"'Revenge, my dear sir.'

"'Revenge!' I repeated, in astonishment. 'Why, I don't understand you.'

"'Well, I'll tell you. Do you see that club over the mantel-piece? Well, I shall be obsequious to that fellow until he owns the place, then I shall snatch down that club and knock him heels over head. Nothing like it. I do all my servants this way, and I enjoy myself better than any man in town. If I hadn't hit upon this plan I would have been dead by this time. Wait a minute—here he comes.'

"The fellow looked sullenly at us and doggedly put a plate in front of me.

"'Oh, Bobbie,' said the Colonel, 'there is no vinegar on the table. I should esteem it a great favor if you were to get some. Oh, don't frown at me that way, Bobbie.'

"The servant made a disrespectful remark. The Colonel jumped up, seized his club and struck Bob an awful blow—knocked him through a window out into the yard. The Colonel's face wore an expression of supreme happiness.

"'Now we'll eat dinner,' said he, resuming his seat. 'If I hadn't struck upon this source of innocent diversion, I might have been in my grave. You see when I cringed to him it was humiliation, but when I knocked him into a figure five it was revenge. Now, I must go out after dinner and get another man. At first he will tell me that he would rather work for me than for any man he ever saw. After awhile, when my kindness becomes more plain, he will become neglectful; and, after awhile—as you have witnessed to-day—he will become insolent. No, sir, I don't know what would have become of me had I not struck upon this happy diversion.'"—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

Double Back-Action Volubility.

The San Francisco girl of 1886 is principally remarkable for her ability to express herself with a double back-action comoination of conciseness and volubility. She has a clever trick of economizing time and space by running two or three words together. She never pauses for the ordinary obstructions of grammar, and when clear, comprehensive English fails her, she instantly resorts to words of her own coinage. The T. C. offers as an example the following intercepted conversation: "'Lo! Whereyergoin?" "'Lo! Jus downear to the dressmaker's." "Dressfinisht?" "Mm—mm! Not quite; 'sgointube lovely." "Howshimakinit?" "Oh! I dunno; little jiggers down the front and pleatinsroun the bottom—sorter sprangly effect. Musturry—goodbye!"—*San Francisco News-Letter.*

Singular Coincidence.

In a city not more than a thousand miles from San Antonio, a local clergyman rented a house for a dwelling that had formerly been a gambling house. One night two young men of his congregation knocked at the door, and, to their horror, their pastor opened the door. They fled in dismay. And now he goes about telling everybody he has strong hopes that the two young men will yet muster up courage to study for the ministry, while they take the pillars of the church aside, and whisper: "He! He! He! Where do you think we saw Parson ——? Why, around at John Smith's gambling room, bucking at monte. Who would have thought it?"

The Sunday offertory has begun to fall off already.—*Texas Siftings.*

PITH AND POINT.

—"Do you wish to be my wife, Mabel?" said a little boy. "Yes," incautiously answered Mabel. "Then pull off my boots."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

—A man who is willing to hold the baby part of the time and grease the griddle in the morning is, in woman's eye, the only substitute for cash.

—"I've eaten next to nothing," lisped Smithers, who was dining with his girl. "Oh, I always do that when I sit by you," responded the young lady, pleasantly.—*Sam.*

—"Give us the ballot-box," is the cry of but very few of the fair sex, while the rest of our feminine population is content with being allowed to frequently stuff the band-box.—*Philadelphia Herald.*

—It is said that "an Ohio man planted the first American flag in California soil in 1833." Whether it grew or not is not stated; but we suppose of course it did. They have a glorious climate out there.—*Lowell Citizen.*

—A man in Northampton County went to sleep in an engine house, using a box of dynamite for a pillow. When he awoke he found his head blown off. It must have been a painful surprise to him.—*Norristown Herald.*

—Innocence Out of the City.—"I wish you'd let me go to the city with you, Charlie, dear," said a young wife to her husband, who is on the Stock Exchange; "I should so like just for once to take a stroll through the money market."—*N. Y. Ledger.*

—Mr. Middlemas met three tramps this morning: to the first he gave five cents, to the second ten cents, and to the third ten cents—what time was it? All give it up? Want me to tell you? Why, it is easy to see what time it was—a quarter to three."—*N. Y. Independent.*

—Nothing makes a man feel the value of an economical wife so much as when he finds that the hundred dollars he had given her to buy Christmas presents with has been invested in paying her dressmaker's bill and buying him a corn-cob pipe.—*Fall River Herald.*

—Wife—"Aren't you going to eat your pudding, dear?" Husband (poking it disparagingly with his spoon)—"It would kill me to eat that mess of indigestible stuff." Wife—"I know it's not very nice, but you had better eat it dear. I hate to see it wasted."—*Chicago Mail.*

—Times are pretty hard with some of the small brokers in the new board of trade district. A deaf and dumb man went into an office in the open Board of Trade Building the other day, and, seizing a piece of paper, wrote: "I am hungry." The broker took the piece of paper, read the unhappy words and scrawled under them: "So am I."—*Chicago Herald.*

—She should have darned 'em—

The beautiful maiden is shopping to-day,
Quite busy, and to her surprise,
While through the thronged street she is taking her way,
Her beau in the street she espies.
Good gracious! 'tis awful! He's coming, no doubt,
And swift to her heart strikes a pain;
The eyes of affection will single her out,
He'll see her and speak, that is plain.
She halts, blushes redly, then crosses the street,
Avoiding the youth that she loves;
The maid it would mortify much should they meet—
There are holes in the tips of her gloves!

—*Boston Courier.*

A GREEN ONE.

He Buys a Prairie-Dog Town for a Mink Colony.

"There are some mighty green men in this world," said the passenger from the West, "and I struck one of 'em a week or two ago. If I hadn't I wouldn't be here now. Last spring I went out in Western Nebraska and homesteaded a quarter section. I hadn't seen the land, but took it supposin' it was all right. But when I got there I found it already inhabited. About one hundred and fifty acres of the one hundred and sixty were covered with a prairie-dog town. Well, I concluded to settle down and see what I could do, and I'm mighty glad now that I did. About two weeks ago I was up to the railroad station trying to get trusted for some bacon and flour and terbacker, an' feelin' right smart discouraged. I was out of money and grub, and the winter was comin' on fast, an I couldn't see anyway out of it but to eat prairie dogs, and they're mighty hard to catch. But that day was the turning point in my luck. While I was at the station an Englishman got off the cars, an' said as how he was out West lookin' for a place to make an investment. Said he'd heard o' the fur business, an' wanted to know if he was out in the fur country yet.

"'Furs,' says I, 'there hain't no't'—an' just then an idea struck me, an' I changed my tune. 'Furs,' says I, 'there ain't no better fur country than this on 'arth. Just come out to my place till I show you my fur farm.'

"And he went out with me, an' I showed him the prairie-dog town, an', as luck would have it, it was a bright, sunny day, an' the dogs were out scootin' around by the hundreds.

"'Talkin' about furs,' says I, 'what d'ye think of that? I've been six years growin' those mink, an' hain't sold a hide. It's all natural grease. Guess they's 'bout seven thousand of 'em now, an' they double every year. How many will there be in ten years?'

"You oughter seen that Englishman's eyes open as he took out his pencil an' figured it up. He made it 7,168,000 mink.

"'Well,' says I, 'call it 5,000,000 to be on the safe side. It won't cost a dollar to keep 'em, either, an' if they're worth a cent they're worth a dollar apiece. There's millions in it.'

"Then we got right down to business an' in less than an hour I had sold out for seven thousand dollars cash, an' the next day I paid three hundred and fifty dollars for the homestead at the Land Office, got my patent and transferred it to him and took the first train for the East. Step into the buffer with me, partner, an' take a drink."—*Chicago Herald.*

READING FOR THE YOUNG.

"SMALL AND TRIFLING."

In your hand you hold an acorn,
Deeming it a worthless thing.
And you cast it from your keeping.
Rain, and dew, and sunlight, bring,
Slowly, surely, an awakening
To the acorn's little heart,
Till the tiny germ within it
Makes a sudden, silent start.

Time goes on. You have forgotten
All about the little shell,
Which, as years slip into decades,
Works its secret mission well.
Ah, could you but read the future,
See what coming years can tell,
You would scarce believe the wonders
Springing from that acorn shell!

First you see come slowly peeping
From the ground a tiny sprout;
Soon 'twould be a tender sapling,
Sending budding leaflets out.
Then you'd see, as years passed onward,
What, as boy, you'd thrown away
Making cool and grateful shadow
For your silvered head some day.

You would see the forest growing
Round the grand old parent tree;
Hear the woodman's axe resounding,
And the busy builders see
At their work on ship and dwelling;
See the vessel proudly glide,
Carrying a precious burden
O'er the ocean wild and wide.

Ah, my boys, we can not always
From a *cause* judge its *effect*.
Grand results may lie safe hidden
In some duty you'd neglect
Just because 'twas small and trifling.
So, my lads, just watch; you'll see
All through life that trifles often
Make or mar a destiny.

—*C. G. Tharin, in Golden Days.*

"THE LITTLE COLONEL."

How He Showed His Love for Those Who Had Loved and Befriended Him—His Faithful Dog.

"Well, my man," asked the Colonel somewhat anxiously as he slowly stirred his breakfast coffee, "what news this morning?"

The orderly stood straight as an arrow before his superior officer, and saluted with military precision when he was spoken to.

"Very bad, sir," he answered. "There are four new cases, and some of the other men are sickening."

The Colonel's little son put down the bread he was eating, and scanned the orderly's face with distressful scrutiny.

"Dear me! Dear me!" said his kind-hearted father, hastily swallowing a few more mouthfuls. "This is a bad business. Where is the doctor now, Burns?"

"In the Second ward, sir."

"Tell him I will be there directly." And in a few minutes he hurried away, leaving his little son and a huge Newfoundland dog to finish their breakfast at their leisure.

"Nilus," said the little fellow, resting his hand on the dog's shaggy head; "what will we do about it?"

The dog looked up with deep sympathy expressed in his beautiful eyes, but he could not think of anything to suggest.

Four years before when the regiment was crossing a stretch of desert in Egypt, the good dog following after had fainted and fallen for want of water. Then the boy had come to the rescue, and with pitying heart knelt down on the hot sand, and gave the animal his share. Nilus, looking up into the little white face bending over him, licked the child's hand with rapturous gratitude, and from that time to this had followed him night and day.

For two years they had been in Bermuda, and the change from the exhausting climate of Egypt had done much for the boy's health. But still the pale face and tiny form would never be ruddy and strong, as the soldiers would fain like to see them. For, even more than to his busy father, it was to them that little Jerome Maitland owed his bringing up.

His mother had died at his birth, and during his babyhood he had been carried about first in one pair of strong arms, then in another.

When the officers' wives would interfere and carry him off he would cry most piteously for his rough nurses, until they were obliged to call in one favorite young subaltern to pacify him.

And now these men, whom he loved, and with whom he had spent all his little life, were dying. How many times had they watched beside him in his childish illnesses, or made the tedious days of camp life bright for him with some clever device!

"We must do something about it, Nilus," he repeated, with a little dry sob, "but what can we do?"

He stood at the door and looked up wistfully at the barrack hospital.

Just then Lieutenant Fearing passed with two or three books under his arm. He watched him as he went by with slow, grave step, and suddenly an idea came into his head. He knew what Fearing was going to do—read to the men; and why could he not do the same thing?

No sooner did the thought occur to him than he started off to take a look at his collection of books. They were not many, or particularly choice. There was "The Boy's Own Book", one or two "Annuals", some volumes of fairy tales, and a beautiful illustrated edition of "Jack the Giant Killer". He lingered over this. Perhaps they might like to see the pictures, and it was such large, clear print he could read it easily. So choosing this at length he and Nilus started off for the hospital.

Before he had reached the door, however, he was stopped by the officer of the day.

"My orders don't admit of your going in there, sir," he said decidedly.

"Oh please, Frith," pleaded Jerome, "I wont stop long." But the soldier shook his head.

"They're too knocked up to pay much attention, even to you, sir. But there are a lot of fellows in the convalescent hospital. P'raps you might go there." So Nilus and Jerome started off again, and this time met with no obstacle.

The men were all seated or lying around in different attitudes in the common room, some of them playing cards. But when they looked up and saw the slight, boyish form standing in the door-way the cards were pushed aside, and a chorus of welcome to their "little Colonel" was heard on all sides.

"I thought perhaps you might be kind of dull," observed Jerome, after a little, "so I brought one of my picture books to read to you," and he settled himself on one of the high wooden chairs, and opened the book.

"All right, little Colonel, fire away," the man said cheerily, and as soon as the clear childish voice commenced not a sound was heard in the room, the great burly fellows following with almost childish interest and respect the varied fortunes of "Jack the Giant Killer".

At the conclusion the child said, a little timidly: "Lieutenant Fearing always reads a little prayer when he gets through. I haven't any book to read it out of, but we can say one."

Then kneeling down on the stone floor, to the utter astonishment of the men, he reverently repeated the Lord's Prayer.

One by one they joined in, and when the little fellow rose, from his knees with a radiant countenance and trotted off with Nilus, there were many requests for him to "come again" and "give us another reading".

The fever waxed and waned, but through it all the convalescent ward kept pretty full.

Day after day, no matter how hot or windy, Jerome would climb up the steep hill leading to the hospital and there read his little simple stories and repeat his daily prayer. He wanted so much to do something for them, these rough nurses and playfellows of his, whom he loved, and this was all he could think of. The rough men knew and appreciated the feeling, and welcomed their "little Colonel" with ready love and sympathy.

But, dear me! How warm the days were beginning to grow. A hot sirocco blew constantly from the southern seas, making all the foliage but the Pride of India trees look dead and drooping. Even the ocean beat on the cliffs below the barracks at Prospect with a dull, sullen sound. Each morning it seemed to be harder than the last for Jerome to climb up that sunny incline towards the hospital, and at length one morning he was too tired to go at all.

When the doctor saw him he shook his head.

"He has got a slight attack of fever," he said, "but I am afraid there is not much strength to carry it off."

A week passed, but he did not seem to get much better, until one night when the stars were shining gloriously and the sea was very still, the angels came down from the Throne of God and carried Jerome back with them, leaving only his little tired body sleeping on his white bed.

But his father had not seen the angels, neither had the soldiers. So, when they came to lay him to rest in the soldiers' cemetery, and fire a parting salute over the tiny mound, there was not a dry eye in all that regiment.

Poor Nilus! He could not tell what it all meant. And when they went away and left his little master with only the sea to talk to him all the long day and night, he lay down beside the grave and no one could get him away. But the next morning at the same hour that Jerome always went to the hospital, Nilus was seen gravely wending his way up there, and walking into the common room took his usual place. The men gathered around him with many expressions of endearment, but he seemed to take all their advances quietly. In about an hour's time he got up and went away, but each day the same thing was repeated. It almost seemed that, unseen to them, the spirit of the boy still lingered among them. And old Nilus did much toward keeping warm and bright in their hearts the recollection of his little master's gentle, loving ways. As often as they saw the faithful dog approaching, their usual avocations were put aside, and that hour for many long months was kept sacred to the memory of their little Colonel. Never an oath or an unkind word did Nilus ever hear in his presence, and the men were better and purer for the memory of the child-life that had gone out from their midst.

"Tell us the story about the little Colonel and Nilus," the soldiers' children would say in after years as they climbed on their fathers' knees.

So the oft-told tale was repeated with faltering lips, to be treasured up in the hearts of many who had never known him.—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

Two Red Lights on the Track Look Like a Mountain of Red Stone.

"Ever ride on an engine on a dark, stormy night, eh? Have you learned what a red light means? I remember one bleak, dreary night in the winter of 1877, I was running on the Erie. We were behind time, and were skimming down the hill toward Alden, when we rounded the curve and saw what seemed to be a blaze of red lights before us. It seemed to me that the country was on fire. My heart jumped into my throat, and I thought my time had come. I reversed my lever, put on the air-brakes, and opened the throttle wide. My fireman had jumped, with serious consequences to himself, and I thought I was a goner. I let one brief prayer escape from my lips, and felt a terrible jarring.

"At first it flashed through my mind that we had struck, but as I heard the jarring of the wheels I found that we were almost at a dead stop, the wheels slipping on account of the force of the steam which had run up. Just about two feet from us was the caboose of a freight train which we would have run into had we not stopped in time. After the excitement was over one infernal fool of a passenger came up and asked why we had stopped so quick, swearing at both the road and myself for stopping trains so quick. The cylinders of my engine cut a little on account of the cinders which were drawn in through reversing, but beyond that no damage was done.

"You can bet your bottom dollar, my boy, that the two red lights on the back of that caboose looked to me that night more like a great mountain of red stone on the track than they did like two inoffensive crimson lights."—*Buffalo Express.*